Research Proposal

INDIA IN COLONIAL PERPETUITY: A STUDY OF *ENGLISH, AUGUST, THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS,* Q & *A* AND *THE WHITE TIGER*

Submitted to:
Chairperson
R. P. C.
JKLU Jaipur
(July 07, 2013)

Submitted by:
Sonu Lohat
Ph. D. Scholar

JK LAKSHMIPAT UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

Outline of the Proposed Research Topic

Name of the candidate	:	Sonu Lohat
Roll No.	:	2012PhDENGG007
Enrollment No	:	20120200237
Place of Research Work	:	J K Lakshmipat University, Jaipur (Rajasthan) India

Proposed Supervisor's Details

Name	:	Dr. Sanjay Kumar
Qualification	:	Ph.D.
Designation	:	Associate Professor
Organization	:	J K Lakshmipat University, Jaipur (Rajasthan) India

Proposed Topic of Research

INDIA IN COLONIAL PERPETUITY: A STUDY OF *ENGLISH, AUGUST, THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS*, Q *& A* AND *THE WHITE TIGER*

Objectives of the Proposed Research

- To define the meaning of colonialism, post-colonialism and neocolonialism. by investigating into historicity of the practice of colonialism and its shaping impact.

- Politics of British colonial system to be studied; economic and cultural erosion; gradual propagation of capitalism and resultant economic dependency on West to be taken into critical evaluation in this research.
- Anatomy and politics of traditional Indian social system such as feudalism, fundamentalism, *Sahebgiri,* religious fanaticism etc. in all four novels are to be studied in detail. Practices of caste system, social and bureaucratic hierarchy, evils of child abuse etc. leading to colonial mentality are to be critically studied.

- To trace out impact of bureaucracy on common people and the factors determining the attitude and tendency to typical of servitude are to be taken into comprehension.

- The concept and phenomena of Raj hangover in the form of snobbery, infatuation, servility and servitude for the Western ways of living in the Indian minds are to be thoroughly evaluated. Deep rooted cynicism owing to age-old class discrimination and chauvinism towards underdogs is to be taken into account.

- This study aims at helping the intelligentsia to get into artistic endeavours made by contemporary writers in describing colonial perpetuity even in a postcolonial Indian society and thereby attaining immanence of self reflexivity on issues of such monumental significance.

Introduction

A large number of the people in Indian society are found ridden with the sense of serving for earning maintenance instead of venturing into entrepreneurship; the tendency to rule is often absent as they seem to prefer to be ruled. This inclination has its roots in adaptation to long historical colonial rule which Indians were subjected to for centuries. The definition of the term 'colonialism' has been tried viewing different dimensions of the term by the critics. Generally speaking, colonialism signifies the siege of capture of some foreign land by a group or nation; take hold on the natural resources and the ruling system of the former (Ania Loomba, Rutledge 2009). Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary defines this as a practice by which a powerful country controls another country or other countries. In a way the critics term it to the practice of imperialism.

India has long history of colonization since the time immemorial; foreign invasions, plunders and resultant varied foreign rules time and again constitute the very core of Indian history. Indians, therefore, have been subjected to continual colonial rule for centuries shaping the culture of the country. However, the anatomy and politics of British colonial system had different character and thus left greater influence on the Indian psyche. British brought a novel way of colonization as they focused on cultural and economic erosion. As a result of this ethnic Indian society, even today, has been too dependent on West that it is dwindling on or around 'hereroglosia'. In the post-colonial time the practice of neocolonialism has taken a firmer grip on Indian minds. So, the concept of neocolonialism signifies the dependency of once colonized countries on the ways of life and certain systems of colonizers, particularly in capitalistic ways. This inevitability of dependency and inescapable situation lead to inclination to servitude to the towering god i.e. West. Long history of recurring invasions, mass massacres and colonization has imprinted ineffaceable sense of inferiority, insecurity, fear and consequent tendency to serve as depicted by the novelists in the selected novels.

Besides, Indian traditional social mechanisms comprising caste hierarchy, feudalism, discrimination, religion etc. also have played great role to groom and condition Indian mentality to servitude. Religion in India has been ever held above all laws and indispensable for people. Its defined practice is necessary evil one has to follow. But the politics of this very religion characteristically signifies fawning, flattery, servility and servitude to powerful gods; who are believed to be ferocious otherwise. *Sahebgiri* has been inculcated by the British ways of ruling;

they were white skinned, superior *sahibs* to Indians. This practice of Saebgiri was so conformed in the minds of Indian people and thus west became *ironical direction of rising sun of* wisdom, knowledge, information and rationale for Indians.

This continuation of colonial practices in once colonized countries has been taken in different spheres of research so far; the scholars have termed this colonial hang over as neocolonialism. The colonial treatment fated at tribal Indians in so-called free India has been taken into research by Jonathan Kennedy and Lawrence King at Cambridge University with the title- *India's New Brand of Colonialism.*

In fact, numerous topics related to colonialism and post-colonialism have been taken for the scholars exploring various shades of colonial aspects in colonized countries like India. Roughly, as *many as three thousand three hundred forty three* studies have been carried out on or about colonialism, post-colonialism and neocolonialism. The concept of post and neo colonialism has been widely taken into pieces by renowned Indian scholars like Harish Trivedi ,Minakshi Mukherjee et. al in *Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context.* Besides, Amitav Ghosh's ***Sea of the Poppies*** has been taken into research work by John Thieme as *All in the Same Boat* for exploring this continuing sense of colonial rule in India.

The works of Narayan, Jhabwala, Rushdie etc. have been under the research of the same type of inquiry. Nevertheless, the proposed research *is set to explore the phenomena* of colonial perpetuity in four novels; intending to focus on the psychological, social, cultural and other factors shaping the colonial mentality of servility of the characters. ***English, August*** is an intensive as well as extensive exploration and investigation of typical Indian bureaucracy and its impact on individuals and society; the novelist, Upmanyu Chatterjee trying to capture the common nuances of servility in public and social life in India. Vivid and humorous descriptions of the subordinate officials, visiting people reveal the fact of inevitable Sahebgiri and servile sense of hypocrisy forming the true picture of Indian society and culture.

In ***The God of Small Things Arundhati*** Roy has painstakingly endeavoured to peel down the thin layer of hypocrisy on the snobbery skin of western-infatuated upper middle class. Baby Kochamma, Chacko, Pappachi and co. seems to rely on the bullying demeanour—snobbishly stooping to powerful while oppressing the weak. Through deep rooted feudal tendencies, British Raj hangover, patriarchy in sophisticated form Roy has laid bare the reality of post 1947 era which is driven by colonial set up of mind. Similarly, the novels ***Q & A*** and ***The White Tiger*** are

the saga of young minds representing have- nots of free India; struggling against colonized, feudal, callous society, yet emerging triumphant from such perpetual colonial social set up.

Literature Review of the Research Topic

It is necessary to consult appropriate documents and sources before going ahead with the research work. The topic on India's colonial perpetuity makes it imperative to take into close study the literature pertaining to the concept of colonialism, post-colonialism, neocolonialism. Literature focusing on the anatomy of Indian social and cultural framework, Indian feudal reality. Subaltern and Dalit studies in Indian context are to be taken for analysis. Writings marked with colonial stylistics and rebellion against such stylistics; new decolonizing Indian fiction writings etc. are to be thoroughly studied.

There have been continuing efforts in the business of defining and applying the concept of colonization in western countries as well across the rest of the world. Going years back Lenin and Kautsky have tried to propound the ideas on imperialism and colonialism in economic context in ***Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*** (1947). However, it is Ania Loomba whose work ***Colonialism/Postcolonialism: the New Critical Idiom*** (1998) is widely consulted as literature reviews in research studies. Loomba has gone into depth in defining the concept of colonialism; differentiating and comparing the concept with Postcolonialism. She, in this book, takes long surveys of varied literatures and theories before coming to the phenomena of post and neocolonialism particularly in once colonized countries.

The concepts of colonialism and resultant neocolonialism have been extensively given critical treatment by Jane Paul Sartre in ***Colonialism and Neocolonialism*** (1964). Sartre's reaction against the imperial and colonial practices has been widely acclaimed particularly in third world countries. This book is the rich source of the ideas pertaining to the hangover of colonial rules in the form of neocolonialism in third world. Edward Said's ***Orientalism*** has become an indispensable source for the research studies pertaining the postcolonial literature. This Syrian scholar has shaken the very moorings of colonized western styled writing with his firm conviction of the strength in third world writings. Homi K. Bhabha with his ***Location of Culture*** and other thought provoking essays has revolutionized the thinking world on colonial and postcolonial realities propounding his exhilarating sense of possible alternatives. His views on

postcolonial discourses hold key to comprehension of motley of concepts related to my research. Similarly Gayatri Chkravorty Spivak's critical essays like, "Rani of Sirmur" etc. are of great help in getting the true ideas of many related concepts.

The Post-Colonial Studies Reader of Bill Ashcroft & Helen Tiffin is a valuable book on post-colonial theory and criticism. Second edition of the same provides the answers related to the sphere of postcolonial writings and is thus should be consulted. Another book by the same writers with inclusion of Gareth Griffiths viz. ***The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*** (1989) carries the views on the reaction, rebellion, freedom and decolonizing writings of once colonized countries. Besides, the essays edited by Meenakshi Mukherjee and Harish Trivedi in ***Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context*** reveal the critical acumen on Indian Postcolonial writings. The essays are exclusively focused on the trends in postcolonial Indian literature; categorizing the writers who wrote under the psychological sway of colonial structured styles and others who seem to revolt against that trend.

Regarding anatomy of Indian society and culture one has to first get first the clear idea of hierarchical system and caste system determining the very construction of Indian reality. Dr. Ambedkar's views on the politics of Indian social construction based on Manu's vision are of great value for such research. Ranajit Guha is the name that often figures in scholarly symposiums, workshops, many treatises and research works on Dalit or subaltern literature. In the book edited by him, ***A Subaltern Studies Reader 1986-1995*** Guha has pinned down the conditions and codes in India determining the pathetic lives of dalits. His analytical studies and views are treated as complimentary for research studies on subalterns as they give ample exposure to the credentials of Indian social construction. In the same way, V. S. Naipaul's ***India: A Wounded Civilization*** is treated as the panorama of the very idea of India; as it provides ample historical details in making of India. Moreover, there are other numerous sources in the form of treatises, critical and creative books, and documentary films like ***Electric Moon*** directed by Pradeep Menon and written by Arundhati Roy focusing on Raj Hangover; official records, sociological history on India and colonial realty that should be consulted for such research as the present one.

Gap in the Existing Research

- It is quite clear on the basis of literature review that the research works on colonialism, postcolonialism, neocolonialism, Indian social construction etc. are numerous.
- However, a comprehensive focus on continuing colonial sense in Indian people on psychological plains and decolonizing efforts on the part of the new writers has not been taken up in research so far.
- Through present study certain nuances of typical Indian servility, servitude, Sahebgiri, perpetual colonial sense captured by selected novelists and otherwise are to be brought to the fore.
- This study aims at paving the ways for scholars recognize the endeavours made by contemporary writers in describing colonial perpetuity even in a postcolonial Indian society and thereby attaining immanence of self reflexivity on issues of such monumental significance.

Methodology

Since the present research come in the category of Ex-Post Fact type research, its main design is based on the four novels selected here viz. ***English, August: An Indian Story, The God of Small Things Q & A*** and ***The White Tiger***.

- Proper material to be selected and directions are to be set under the guidance of the supervisor before going ahead.
- Thorough literature survey concerning the colonialism, Postcolonialism, neocolonialism and other aspects of the topic will to be carried out.
- Detailed and thorough reading of the primary sources i.e. selected novels, making notes, analyses of the ideas therein will be taken into exercise.
- Critical books, documents, films, documentaries, magazines, newspapers etc. are to be taken for critical study.
- Studied and analyzed material to be dexterously utilized into the framework of chapterization and final contour of the research will be prepared with the help of the instructor.

Tentative Chapterization

1. **Introduction**
2. ***English, August* :A Farce on Anatomy and Politics of Sahebgiri**
3. ***The God of Small Things*: A Saga of Raj Hangover**
4. ***Q & A*: Questioning the Colonizing Social System**
5. **The White Tiger: An Onslaught on Colonizing Feudalism**
6. **Orchestrating Stylistic Mutiny: Decolonizing the Indian Aesthetics**
7. **Conclusion**

Possible Outcomes:

- The sense of colonial hangover will be brought into light.
- The causes, circumstances, historical background of perpetual colonial conditions will be critically studied. The awareness of them may help society the shed off this sense of colonial rule.
- The outcome of this research may lead to the realization of western infatuation, snobbery, social cynicism, feudal mentality etc.
- The nuances of colonial reality which are not captured by average people to be brought into fore.
- This research may give newer directions to further studies on colonialism on sociological and psychological plains.

References:

Bhattacharya, Arnab, ed. ***Understanding India: Studies in Indian English Fiction*** (Kolkata: Books Way, 2010).

Berman, Marshall. ***Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: The Communist Manifesto*** (New York: Penguin Books, 2011).

Chandra, Bipan et al. ***India's Struggle for Independence*** (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1988).

Das, Bijay Kumar. ***Postmodern Indian English Literature*** (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2003).

Guha, Ranajit, ed. ***A Subaltern Studies Reader 1986-1995*** (New Delhi: OUP, 1997).

Kennedy, Jonathan and Lawrence King.' ***India's New Brand of Colonialism'*** at: http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/india%E2%80%99s-new-brand-of-colonialism#sthash.Ky516Kb9.dpuf)

Kinger, Naresh. ***The Greatest Socialist Thinker Karl Marx*** (New Delhi: Sahni Publications, 2009).

Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism: The New Critical Idiom* (London: Rutledge, 2009).

Malgonkar, Manohar. ***A Bend in the Ganges*** (New Delhi: India Ink, 1964).

Naipaul, V. S. ***India: A Wounded Civilization*** (London: Penguin Books, 1979).

Omvedt, Gail. ***Dalit Visions*** (New Delhi: Orient Black Swan, 1996).

Sartre, Jane Paul. ***Colonialism and Neocolonialism*** (Abington, Oxon: Routledge Classics, 2006).

Trivedi, Harish. "India and Post-Colonial Discourse". *Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context,* 2nd reprint, ed. Harish Trivedi and Meenakshi Mukherjee (Shimla: I.I.O.A.S., 2006).

Vivekananda, Swami. *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, 13th Impr., (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2008).

"Postcolonial Indian Literature in English: Narayan, Jhabvala, Rushdie." 123HelpMe.com. 29 Jun 2013 http://www.123HelpMe.com/view.asp?id=38747

Bibliography:

Primary Sources

Chatterjee, Upmanyu. ***English, August***. London: Faber & Faber, 1988.

Roy, Arundhati. ***The God of Small Things.*** New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.

Swarup, Vikas. ***Q & A.*** London: Black Swan, 2005.

Swarup, Vikas. ***Six Suspects***. London: Black Swan, 2009.

Adiga, Arvind. ***The White Tiger.*** New Delhi: Harper Collins and India Today Group, 2008.

Pradeep, Krishen. ***Electric Moon*** (documentary film). London: Kaleidoscopic Entertainment, 1992. (Written by Arundhati Roy).

Secondary Sources

Bhattacharya, Arnab, ed. ***Understanding India: Studies in Indian English Fiction***. Kolkata: Books Way, 2010.

Berman, Marshall. ***Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: The Communist Manifesto.*** New York: Penguin Books, 2011.

Chandra, Bipan et al. ***India's Struggle for Independence.*** New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1988.

Claire Colebrook. ***Irony***: ***the New Critical Idiom***. London: Routledge, 2009.

Das, Bijay Kumar. ***Postmodern Indian English Literature***. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2003.

Guha, Ranajit, ed. ***A Subaltern Studies Reader 1986-1995***. New Delhi: OUP, 1997.
Kennedy, Jonathan and Lawrence King. ***'India's New Brand of Colonialism'*** at: http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/india%E2%80%99s-new-brand-of-colonialism#sthash.Ky516Kb9.dpuf)

Kinger, Naresh. ***The Greatest Socialist Thinker Karl Marx***. New Delhi: Sahni Publications, 2009.

Kuber, V. N. ***B. R. Ambedkar.*** New Delhi: Publication House MOIB, 1990.

Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism:* ***The New Critical Idiom***. London: Rutledge, 2009.

Malgonkar, Manohar. ***A Bend in the Ganges***. New Delhi: India Ink, 1964.

Marx, Karl. ***Das Kapital.*** Indian edition New Delhi: Research Press, 2009.

Naipaul, V. S. ***India: A Wounded Civilization***. London: Penguin Books, 1979.

Omvedt, Gail. ***Dalit Visions***. New Delhi: Orient Black Swan, 1996.

Sartre, Jane Paul. ***Colonialism and Neocolonialism***. Abington, Oxon: Routledge Classics, 2006.

Spear, Percival. ***A History of India*** ,vol. two . New Delhi: Pelican and Penguin Books, 1990.

Thapar Romila. ***A History of India,*** vol. one. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1966.

Trivedi, Harish. "India and Post-Colonial Discourse". *Interrogating Post-Colonialism: Theory, Text and Context,* 2nd reprint, ed. Harish Trivedi and Meenakshi Mukherjee (Shimla: I.I.O.A.S., 2006).

Vivekananda, Swami. *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, 13th Impr., (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2008).